

DEADLY SILENCES

THE HURRICANE ANDREW COVER-UP

The authorities grossly understated the death toll from hurricane Andrew, the worst natural disaster in US history, and left thousands of survivors to die in a zone contaminated by radiation.

THE EMERGENCY ALERT THAT CAME TOO LATE

The largest natural disaster ever recorded in the history of the United States was hurricane Andrew, which struck South Dade County, Florida, as midnight turned the clock into August 24, 1992. Contrary to what the American news media broadcast across the United States and throughout Europe, the first outer wall of the hurricane unexpectedly slammed into South Dade, packing 214+ mph winds which quickly escalated to 350+ mph. Most of the 414,151 residents living in the danger zone were asleep when the outer wall struck. Thousands of them lost their lives, for no one in South Dade had been evacuated or even advised to evacuate. Instead, residents had been repeatedly informed by local news media that South Dade should expect to experience "50 mph winds".

By 11.00 am the following morning, 8,230 mobile homes along with 9,140 apartments had vanished off the face of the Earth. The Hiroshima-like horror was beyond catastrophic. Entire families perished in ways too horrifying to describe. The stench of death had already begun to saturate miles and miles of the massive devastation; the hot humid air was reeking with foul, rotting flesh.

How do I know? Because I was in the midst of it all.

Never will I forget the frantic, last-minute "emergency alert" broadcast that was aired on television just before all hell broke loose. My son and I had the TV on, hoping to catch an updated report on the hurricane, when the screen suddenly went blank with a loud warning signal. Before we knew it, a panic-stricken voice began the announcement:

We interrupt this program to bring you an emergency alert from the National Broadcast Emergency Center. This is an emergency alert! I repeat, this is an emergency alert! The outer winds of hurricane Andrew have just reached the Florida coast. Hurricane Andrew has unexpectedly shifted five degrees south. I repeat, Hurricane Andrew has shifted five degrees south. Andrew is expected to strike South Dade within minutes. I repeat, Andrew is expected to strike South Dade within minutes. All South Dade residents should take immediate cover! I repeat, all South Dade residents should take immediate cover! This is an emergency alert!

Our tiny pre-fab apartment, which was nothing more than a glorified mobile home, had been constructed to withstand maximum wind speeds of 90 mph. The blood-curdling announcement gripped us both. Paralysed by sheer terror, our bulging eyes stayed glued to the television as the voice continued.

All South Dade residents are advised to stay put! Do not attempt to leave the area!

Within seconds, we actually heard hurricane Andrew bearing down on us, slamming into us with all the force of a speeding locomotive. The horrendous wall of winds crashed against our tiny apartment like an exploding bomb! Glasses flew off the kitchen counter, shattering onto the quaking floor. Hanging pictures plunged straight down the walls towards the ground. The huge hanging mirror crashed on top of the television set, spraying the living room with shattered glass. The entire apartment resembled a rickety old train, shaking fiercely out of control while rumbling down a railroad track. The screeching winds quickly transformed into the piercing, monotone hum of a jet engine, sounding as if it had sucked us inside! It was so deafening, all other noises ceased to exist. It felt

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like a monstrous earthquake-and-tornado hitting at the same time!

Before either one of us could react, the metal front door of our apartment began to peel steadily downward towards the floor, like a piece of wet, limp paper. Then the voracious jaws of Andrew attacked for the final kill. A mega-giant, two-storey-tall, solid concrete transformer pole with electrical cables attached, torpedoed right through our living room wall and roof, exploding the entire building on impact! And that was just the beginning...

ATROCITIES IN THE AFTERMATH

There isn't a person on the face of this Earth who will ever convince me that hurricane Andrew was a "hurricane" by any sense of the definition. Just ask any survivor of Andrew what the six-and-a-half-hour siege was like and the answer will always be the same. "We didn't have any prior warning. We heard hurricane Andrew suddenly bearing down on us like a speeding locomotive." This is the same description given by survivors of monstrous F-5 tornadoes (packing winds of 350+ mph)—the only difference being that tornadoes strike for just seconds, whereas hurricane Andrew struck and stayed for hours on end.

The injuries of those who survived were mind-boggling. I had a broken jaw with eight teeth knocked out. Huge shards of glass impaled my body so deeply, they were impossible to remove without the aid of a scalpel. My head injuries were so severe that they permanently affected my eyesight.

But I was only one amongst thousands of severely injured victims who struggled to survive the aftermath. For ten long days we were roped off from the outside world by United States military forces, leaving us stranded with no food, no water, no medical supplies, no shelter. Suffering from severe shell-shock, we waited and waited for rescue teams to arrive, but that just never happened. None of the injured in the roped-off areas was ever rescued from the devastation. It was the worst gut-wrenching betrayal I have ever experienced. I saw grown men lying on the ground in the foetal position, moaning and groaning pathetically as they tried to hug and rock themselves. My son was amongst them.

Don't get me wrong. United States military forces were indeed present in the roped-off areas within hours of Andrew ending. But they were not there to help survivors. The National Guard along with the Coast Guard, the Army, FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency), Metro Dade Police, state police and local police removed dead bodies and body parts as quickly as possible during those first ten days of the aftermath. Horrified survivors watched as both uniformed and civilian-clothed men searched the rubble and filled body bags, which they then stacked in military vehicles or huge refrigerator trucks normally used to transport food, only to drive off and leave the stranded injured to fend for themselves.

Not until I managed to escape the aftermath did I discover that the "thermo-king" sections of these same refrigerator trucks, jam-packed with wall-to-wall body bags, ended up being stored at Card Sound Navy Base, located in an isolated area just above the

Florida Keys. The inside temperature was kept cool by portable generators until the bodies were either incinerated or just plain dumped into huge open grave pits.

Those working on the body pick-up operation were forced to take what is known as the Oath of Sworn Secrecy, which is strictly enforced by the government. Many of them plunged into shock, once exposed to the ghastly devastation and countless mutilated bodies.

The horrors were way beyond human comprehension. I can vouch for this, as I accidentally stepped on the severed hand of a young child when I initially crawled out of the debris, only to witness shortly thereafter two dead teenagers and the decapitated body of a baby girl.

Fighting mental shock became such a big problem for the body pick-up teams that a special group of psychiatrists had to be brought in to help them cope with it. I believe this in itself is the reason why many who worked on the body collection didn't comprehend the tragic consequences this would inevitably lead to in the future.

The survivors of hurricane Andrew and the rest of the American people were betrayed by their own government. But the betrayal also extended to foreign nationals. At the time Andrew struck, South Dade was inhabited by a large population of Mexican illegal immigrants. The United States Department of Immigration was fully aware of their presence but quietly turned its back on the situation, knowing full well that

South Dade farmers couldn't afford to harvest their crops without the help of the Mexican illegals. The heavily populated migrant camps were situated at the edge of the Florida Everglades. The people who lived there vanished without a trace during that fated night. Many bodies were found way out in the Everglades.

When I lectured at the Clearwater Convention in Florida in 1999, a man in the audience stood up and introduced himself as Chief Petty Officer Roy Howard. He proceeded to address the audience with this exact

statement, which is now a matter of public record:

Just for your information, I was called up to active duty after hurricane Andrew went through South Dade County. I spent nine weeks down there. Now I will certify for the benefit of our audience here that the death figures that were officially published are totally inaccurate. According to the information which I received from my own sources within the National Guard, the figure I was quoted when I was down there was 5,280-something. And they were quietly disposed of in incinerators that were hurriedly put together by both the National Guard and FEMA...

As the Chief Petty Officer stated, "5,280-something" bodies were confiscated by the United States National Guard. In addition to this, the Coast Guard independently confiscated "1,500 bodies" from the lakes and surrounding waters. Neither one of these figures embraces the number of dead bodies confiscated by

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other branches of federal and state government directly involved in the body pick-up operation. This leaves the number of dead confiscated by various US authorities in South Dade still unknown.

The total number who died during hurricane Andrew is obviously staggering, yet whenever the "official death toll" is mentioned in the media, a figure of anywhere between 15 and 59 is quoted. The population of the 21 communities annihilated by Andrew's eye-wall had been officially recorded by the Dade County Census Bureau as 415,151 before Andrew struck.

Bodies of human beings confiscated and disposed-of like rubbish, as if their lives had no more worth or meaning than a piece of discarded litter—it's horrifying to be suddenly confronted by the same kind of atrocities as perpetrated by the Nazis. Once again repeating history, a master-minded cover-up was dutifully carried out by armed military forces, right smack in the midst of horrendous human suffering.

To complete this historical comparison, in the same way that many residents who lived near Nazi concentration camps were unaware or in denial of the atrocities close by, so too were many residents who were located just outside the catastrophic devastation left behind by Andrew's eye-wall.

GOVERNMENT BETRAYAL

So what actually did take place when Andrew survivors tried to get help from those collecting dead bodies in the aftermath? Well, I for one can give a first-hand account.

About the third day into the aftermath, a long line of police cars cautiously drove into my area during the late afternoon. We had not had contact with any other people from outside the devastation up until this point. There were approximately 12 to 15 police cars comprising this caravan, each marked from different locations throughout the state. Each car was driven by a man dressed in a dark police uniform and had three other plain-clothed men riding as passengers, making a total of four men in each vehicle.

Someone from our group spotted the caravan and ran to get me, knowing that I had been badly injured and urgently needed emergency medical help. My twenty-five-year-old son and one other adult male survivor helped escort me to the caravan. We hurried towards the lead car. It stopped moving when we approached the driver's side. The officer sitting behind the wheel rolled down the window. For a few moments he rudely ignored us, at one point giving us an impatient look of disgust.

This is the exact conversation and course of events that took place.

"Please, sir, I need medical help," I begged, barely able to speak.

The officer sitting behind the wheel sighed heavily. He turned his head away from me and gazed out his windshield. The other three men in the car quietly looked at me.

"Sir, please, I need to get to a hospital...," I begged frantically.

The officer took his time about reaching over to turn off the engine. With another sigh, he slowly opened the door and

climbed out. He then proceeded to close the door and stood there with his legs spread astride.

"Lady, do me a favour," he answered. "Find yourself a piece of paper and a pencil. Write down your name and social security number next to the telephone number of your nearest living relative. Tuck the piece of paper in your pocket so tomorrow, when I find your body, I'll know who to contact."

"No! No!" I cried out. "You don't understand. I need to get to a hospital. I've been badly injured."

"No! *You're* the one who doesn't understand," he hissed back.

With that, he reached over to his holster and took out his gun. He grabbed me, forcing me up against the side of the car, and proceeded to put the barrel of the gun against my temple. I heard the hammer cock.

From the position he had pushed me into, I could see directly into the car. The man sitting in the front passenger seat looked away from me immediately, glancing down at the floor. The two passengers in the back seat turned their heads quickly, staring out the window on the opposite side of the car.

My son and the other survivor watched as the officer had pulled back the hammer on the gun. So shocked out of their minds by what they were witnessing, neither one could move!

"You don't belong here!" the officer growled, pressing the barrel into the side of my head. "Now you get the hell outta here before I blow away your ass!"

He shoved my face into the car window and then released me. Someone grabbed me from behind and whirled me around so fast, I didn't have time to think! Before I knew it, I was being thrown over a shoulder. My rescuer took off running as fast as he could! I caught a brief glimpse of my son running next to me. With one gigantic leap, he and the survivor who carried me, dove behind a pile of debris. All three of us crashed on top of each other in one tangled-up heap.

"I'll shoot your damn asses!" the officer's voice rang out.

**"You don't belong here!"
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pressing the barrel
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my head.**

**"Now you get the
hell outta here
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your ass!"**

When hurricane Andrew slammed into South Dade, the State Attorney of Florida was none other than Janet Reno. Her office was located at the Dade County Court House in the City of Miami. The President of the United States was President George H.W. Bush, and the Vice-President was Dan Quayle. Bill Clinton was running for President, and Al Gore for Vice-President. Senator Bob Graham held office, and the late Lawton Chiles was Governor of Florida. His successor turned out to be Jeb Bush, still the Governor of Florida and, ironically enough, the son of former President Bush whose other son, George W. Bush, the then Governor of Texas, has since become the "self-selected" President of the United States...

Curious how the United States Government evacuated Homestead Air Force Base just before hurricane Andrew struck, yet never released the information to the civilians of South Dade.

"This is worse than anything we saw in Saudi," said Master Sgt Lester Richardson (who had spent six months in the Middle East during Operation *Desert Storm*) one week into the aftermath.

"These people need a miracle..."

The survivors did need "a miracle", but what we got instead didn't resemble anything near it.

MEDIA UNDERSTATEMENT

While we remained roped off from the outside world by Metro Dade Police and the military, the news media reported grossly understated information from the first day onward.

On August 24, 1992, the morning hurricane Andrew ended, the *Miami Herald* broke with:

Andrew Hits Hardest in South Dade. Five thousand people were left homeless by the storm, Metro Dade Police Director announced. They'll be moved into shelters in North Dade.

Over subsequent days, the *Miami Herald* read as follows:

August 25, 1992:

Destruction at Dawn. Among worst hit in the Country Walk area of South Dade, few homes escaped at least minor damage and many were utterly destroyed. 10 killed in Dade.

August 27, 1992:

The Toll Rises. 22 dead as the search continues. 63,000 homes destroyed. 175,000 homeless. 1 million without power.

August 28, 1992:

WE NEED HELP. Relief effort collapsing due to United States inaction, Metro charges. Aid us now or more will die, Feds told. As Dade County's hurricane relief effort neared collapse Thursday, more than 1,500 airborne US soldiers were ordered into the county to cope with what is now being called the worst natural disaster in United States history. The move came after a day of bitter sniping among agencies that share responsibility for the relief effort.

United States aid official Wallace Stickler stated: "Andrew has caused more destruction and affected more people than any disaster America has ever had."

Dade County's Emergency Director pleaded for federal help, one angry voice among many that spoke in dire terms of needs unmet. Frustrated to the point of tears, Kate Hale said that the relief project was on the brink of collapse, a victim of incompetence and political games:

"Where the hell is the cavalry on this one? We need food! We need water! We need people! If we do not get more food into the south end [South Dade] in a very short period of time, we are going to have more casualties!"

"We have a catastrophic disaster. We are hours away from more casualties. We are essentially the walking wounded. We have appealed through the State to the Federal Government. We've had a lot of people down here for press conferences. But Dade County is on its own. Dade County is being caught in the middle of something and we are being victimized."

"Quit playing like a bunch of kids and get us aid! Sort out your political games afterward!"

On the same day Hale made the desperate plea, *Miami Herald* staff writers Martin Merzer and Tom Fiedler wrote:

The question echoed through the debris Thursday: If we can do it for Bangladesh, for the Philippines, for the Kurds of northern Iraq, why in God's name can't we deliver basic necessities of life to the ravaged population of our own Gold Coast?"

The short answer: because no single person or agency is in charge.

The result: a planeload of food and equipment is still a rarity. Instead of delivering goods, helicopter pilots shuttle government officials who just sit idle. Metro police turn away individuals trying to bring in food or water to a barren South Dade.

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On August 29, 1992, six days into the aftermath, the *Miami Herald* reported:

Problems Plague Red Cross. The man on the phone wanted to donate 100 electric generators, extension cords and enough tools to build a small subdivision. But the operator who took his call at the Red Cross Command Center in Miami had no idea what to do with the offer.

"We get a call, we take a message, we give it to somebody who signs it to somebody else," said the operator, Melitta de Liefd. "We have no idea what happens to it. The whole place is being run by senior citizens and college kids."

Welcome to Red Cross headquarters—where the brains of Dade County rescue effort have been knocked almost unconscious most of the week.

Callers offering services and supplies are put on hold. Others can't get through at all. The hurt and suffering plead for help over ham radio.

On August 29, 1992, one week after hurricane Andrew struck, the Fort Lauderdale *Sun Sentinel* reported 250,000 people homeless in South Dade.

A NUCLEAR INCIDENT

Of course, the rather "insignificant" incident resulting from Andrew's winds bombarding the Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant was not aired by the news media either nationally or abroad.

Tom Dubocq reported in the *Miami Herald* of September 5, 1992:

Demolition crews toppled a 400-foot smokestack at Turkey Point [Nuclear] Power Plant [owned by Florida Power and Light Company], Friday [September 4]. The stack, which had a gaping 200-foot crack, was dropped without a hitch, a Florida Power and Light [FPL] spokesman said. The other smokestack at the plant will be salvaged. Turkey Point will be shut down for several months while repairs are made. The

cost will exceed \$90 million, according to an initial damage report...

When Turkey Point was built in the 1960s, its main structures were designed to withstand 235 mph winds. Hurricane Andrew was clocked at 164 mph at the plant. FPL officials don't know why the smokestack didn't hold up...

One hundred million dollars worth of damage resulted from the nuclear power plant's smokestack having been cracked wide open.

The plant is situated approximately 15 miles northeast of where I lived. How well I recall the leaflets circulated several months before Andrew struck, advising all residents within a "thirty-five mile radius" of Turkey Point nuclear plant to be aware of the potential hazards involved if an event such as a natural disaster or unexpected catastrophe happened. Such a grim reminder of the Chernobyl tragedy.

Could it be more than coincidence that within 24 hours of hurricane Andrew ending, all 12 survivors in my little group, including our animals, broke out in big, raw, oozing sores which itched and burned at the same time? We suffered horrible headaches which made us so nauseous we had the dry heaves, and our stomachs cramped badly from sudden onsets of diarrhoea. These symptoms lasted well over three months. Within a relatively short period of time, each one of our surviving animals died from cancer.

HURRICANE BUREAU'S FAILURE TO WARN

Speaking of coincidence, I often wonder what kind of a coincidence it is that the National Hurricane Bureau is responsible for reporting to the US Department of Commerce—especially considering that during 1992 South Florida did \$31 billion worth of trade in tourism.

Hurricane Andrew had barely left Florida, heading for Louisiana, when the Division of Tourism placed a \$47,000 advertisement in *USA Today*, reading "Florida, we're still open".

"Most people have very short memories. We're all sort of banking on that," said Donal Dermody, Director of the Nova University Center for Hospitality Management.

Kind of puts a big damper on belief in the human race: hide the truth, ignore the suffering, do it for a dollar!

What upsets me most is the incident that happened during the late afternoon hours just prior to Andrew striking. I had just walked out to the garbage dumpsters, located by the parking lot, to throw away some garbage. I turned to head back to the apartment when the horn of an oncoming car began blasting away. I looked up to see a familiar resident, whom I had spoken to on many different occasions, heading directly towards me. This particular individual worked at Metrozoo.

Being affiliated with wild animals, he frequently stopped by to ask me questions about the behaviour of certain species. He sped right up to me and then slammed on the brakes.

"Come here!" he whispered excitedly.

I leaned down close to him. "What's the matter?"

"Listen!" he paused to look around nervously. "You've got to get the hell outta here now!"

"Why?" I asked, puzzled by his behaviour.

"I haven't got time to explain," he whispered. "But I just came from the National Hurricane Bureau in the Gables. Gotta friend of mine who works over there; bigwig—know what I mean?"

"Yeah..." I nodded.

"Well, this isn't for public information, if you get my drift," he went on rapidly. "But the National Hurricane Bureau has known all along that hurricane Andrew is going to slam into South Dade! They're telling the public it's going to come in at Palm Beach because they want Miami Beach evacuated, and there aren't enough shelters for South Dade residents to evacuate to. They

"Well, this isn't for public information, if you get my drift," he went on rapidly. "But the National Hurricane Bureau has known all along that hurricane Andrew is going to slam into South Dade!"



don't wanna cause panic. So they're keeping quiet. We're all a bunch of god-damn sitting ducks! You got to get the hell outta here! This is a killer hurricane! Nobody's ever seen anything like this before!"

"Holy shit!" I exclaimed, shocked out of my mind. "You mean Andrew's coming over South Dade?"

"Damn straight! That's exactly what I mean! They figure the eye of the storm is coming right in over us! Those fellas at the National Hurricane Bureau have known it all along! I'm gettin' the hell outta here now! Shit, man, this thing is a killer hurricane! Listen, I gotta run! Get your son and get the hell out now! You ain't gonna have a shot in hell once it hits!"

I ran into the apartment and called my son at work, begging him to come home so we could get out. I had no reason to disbelieve anything I had just heard. I knew my neighbour well enough to know he wouldn't fabricate anything like this. So I related the entire conversation to my son, Eric. He was stunned! Eric said he would leave work within a few minutes, but as the minutes ticked on they dragged into hours.

Another immediate course of action I took after hearing the terrifying warning from my neighbour was to phone the local CBS television station located in Miami. I called three separate times. Each time, my call went directly into the local news broadcast room of meteorologist Bryan Norcross. Although I never spoke to Norcross directly, I did manage to speak to three separate individuals working in the broadcast room.

I specifically stated: "I live in South Dade, adjacent to Metrozoo and within walking distance of Country Walk, in a pre-fab apartment that is constructed to withstand up to 90 mph winds. Should I evacuate?"

All three individuals advised and reassured me that I was situated in a safe area. There definitely wasn't need for me to take any evacuation measures.

Meanwhile, one work catastrophe after another seemed to crash down on my son, until finally it was just too late for us to evacuate. By the time he got home it was almost midnight. Within minutes of his arrival, Andrew slammed into us with full force.

ONGOING TRAGEDIES FROM THE COVER-UPS

It's not easy dealing with the anguish I feel because of all the perpetrated lies. So much suffering resulted. It took three-and-a-half weeks before my son and I managed to escape the devastation on our own. Homeless and penniless, with no insurance to cover our losses, we slowly made our way north towards Broward County, our only possessions being the clothes on our backs and a demolished van. The long, agonising journey turned out to be another nightmare from hell.

Over 4,000 people were officially listed as "Missing" in Andrew when we parted South Dade. I had lost 23 pounds during those wretched weeks of being trapped in the devastation and still had not received any medical attention. Little did I realise it would take another three weeks before a doctor would even agree to see me without any money or identification. By then, six

weeks had passed since I had been injured. Most of my teeth had turned a putrid grey colour because the nerves had died as a result of fierce blows to my head, complicated by my broken jaw. The final heartbreak came when doctors discovered the optic nerve in both my eyes had begun to die off—which meant, because of the head injuries, I was going blind.

This may sound strange but, regardless, it is the truth. Today, in the year 2001, there still remain three ongoing tragedies created by hurricane Andrew cover-ups—tragedies which remain unbearable for the survivors to live with.

The first tragedy is the horrifying fact that the bodies of our loved ones were intentionally confiscated from us by our own government and then so inhumanely disposed of. Without graves, or some kind of memorial erected in their memory, we have no hope of reaching closure.

The second tragedy is the impact the cover-ups had in downplaying, dismissing and ignoring our horrendous suffering.

And the third tragedy is the great number of Andrew survivors who were inevitably forced to join the ranks of approximately 10 million other homeless Americans struggling to stay alive on the streets. With 10 million Americans homeless, and another 32 million Americans going to sleep hungry each night, the United States Government can't truthfully claim to be a government for *all* the people.

Maybe it's just me, but I honestly thought the world learned a lesson from the Nuremberg trials in Germany: "Evil can only be defined as absence of empathy..."

SIMILARITIES IN TURKEY

On June 20, 2000, I flew to Istanbul, Turkey, where I lectured at a major international conference. While visiting there, I was asked if there was anything I specifically wished to do or see. My simple answer came very naturally.

"Yes, I would like to visit the areas that were devastated by the earthquakes last August and November and

spend time with the survivors."

The following day my simple wish was granted. I was graciously escorted by a medical doctor who had unselfishly devoted many hours of practice in the devastated regions. When he informed me that 20,000+ died in August 1999 during the Izmit earthquake and that another 20,000+ died in November during the Bolu earthquake, I was stunned. This was not what the news media had reported.

"Are you saying that between the two earthquakes last year, over 40,000 people died?" I asked.

His eyes filled with tears. "Yes," he nodded sadly. "Over 40,000 people perished, between the two disasters."

The horrendous destruction I saw matched every word he stated. I walked over areas where the earth had opened up, swallowing entire buildings before closing back up again, like a giant white shark gulping down its prey. I understood when weeping

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survivors squeezed my hand tightly, too overcome by grief to explain how they never found the bodies of their loved ones. Long pauses of silence took over when tears replaced words.

The poverty I witnessed was too startling to escape my poorly sighted eyes. Pathetic cardboard-type huts, covered by plastic sheets, greeted me everywhere I went. Then there were the bleak rows of government-funded temporary housing which lacked simple basic needs like indoor private showers.

I often wonder, now that I've returned back home, how those Turkish survivors weathered the 115° temperatures of July, since their temporary housing lacked proper insulation and air-conditioning. As the month of August began to unfold, torrential rains bombarded the country, bringing a new kind of disaster: flash flooding. How many lives were lost to *this* disaster?

The most pathetic survivors of all are children. Like many of the children who survived hurricane Andrew, many Turkish children whom I saw who could no longer smile or play. Shell-shock has very pro-

nounced effects on the young; often, they stop communicating altogether.

One little girl in particular caught my attention. Her arm had been badly injured, twisted into a permanent position of deformity. She stood very still, holding her hair in her good hand, never moving or showing any signs of emotion.

"She needs medical attention," I said to the doctor.

"Yes," he agreed, "a lot of the young survivors desperately need medical attention."

His answer puzzled me. "But I thought financial aid was donated from foreign countries."

"Yes," he nodded, "but most of the money ended up in the pockets of government officials. It never reached the survivors."

How well I knew what that meant. How well indeed.

After pausing, he added, "When the earthquakes struck, one foreign country offered to construct a hospital at the devastated site. But because of political differences, our government refused the offer."

I left the Turkish people, wondering: what kind of future is man creating for himself? Only one thought came to mind:

"Evil can only be defined as absence of empathy..."

Editor's Note:

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